Southern Arizona Resource Advisory Committee and Title II Projects

The Southern Arizona Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) has been convened to help US Forest Service distribute Title II funds, to improve resource conditions and assist in road management issues. The RAC is made up of 15 members who serve 4-year terms. The RAC's primary focus are parts of the Coronado and of the Tonto National Forests. Proposed projects the Southern Arizona RAC review and recommend are designed to improve National Forest System lands and the rural economies of the local counties. Title II, funding through the Southern Arizona RAC is available to Pima, Maricopa, Cochise, Santa Cruz, and Pinal counties. Counties receive these federal funds based on the percentage of land in federal ownership, special use receipt payments, and per capita income. Approximately $880,000 will be available for Southern Arizona RAC recommendations (funding 2017-2020) and be allocated based on available dollars within each county.

Title II funds, one part of the [Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act](), are used for the for protection, restoration, and enhancement of resource conditions and road management, consistent with the Act, on National Forest System (NFS) lands and on non-Federal lands where projects would benefit the resources of NFS lands.

Project Purpose and Objectives

Projects are considered for funding if they make additional investments in, and create employment opportunities through:

- Improvement of existing infrastructure maintenance;
- Implementation of stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems;
- Restoration and improvement of land health and water quality.
- Projects must comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations.
- Projects must be consistent with the applicable resource management plan and with any watershed or subsequent plan developed pursuant to the resource management plan.

The funds may be used for projects that have broad-based support and with objectives that include:

- Road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration,
- Soil productivity improvement,
- Forest ecosystem health improvements,
- Watershed restoration and maintenance,
- Wildlife and fish habitat restoration, maintenance, and improvement,
- Noxious and non-native weeds control,
- Native species re-establishment,
- Fire prevention and hazardous fuel reduction, and
- Sustainable recreation.

Planning and implementing the projects should help improve cooperative relationships among the people that use and care for Federal land and the agencies that manage the Federal land. **At least 50% of all project funds are to be used for projects that are primarily dedicated to road maintenance, decommissioning, or obliteration; or to restoration of streams and watersheds.**

Who Can Apply: Federal agencies, tribal governments, state and local governments, non-profit organizations, and private entities.

Information and Guidance for Project Applicants.

Updated: D. Backer June 24, 2021

1. It is important to the Southern Arizona Resource Advisory Committee to solicit a diversity of projects that support local communities and their ties to US Forest Service lands, and that we work together to promote: community engagement, partnerships, collaboration, education and local leadership; to improve the sustainability of local economies, ecological services and stewardship opportunities on public lands.

2. The deadline for project proposals is September 1, 2021. All project proposals must be submitted or postmarked by the deadline date.

3. Project proposals **must** have a recommendation by the local District Ranger and any other landowner/manager involved in the project **prior to proposal submission.**

4. Project proposals must be accompanied by a completed and signed Title II Project Submission Form available at https://cms.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/secure-rural-schools/title-2

5. Partnerships and collaboration with other organizations is encouraged. Proposals should be cost-effective and clearly describe project benefits to natural resources, federal lands, recreation, residents, local economies, safety, etc.

6. No matching funds are required for RAC grants, but proponents are strongly encouraged to provide financial and/or in-kind contributions. These contributions should be enumerated in both the project proposal and accompanying budget.

7. Project proposals will be evaluated on cost-effectiveness including financial and in-kind contributions, demonstration of partnership involvement, benefits to ecosystem health, improvement in the quality of human life including, and employment opportunities.

8. Approved project funding may be used for the cost of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, or for on-the-ground project implementation, where NEPA has already been completed.

9. Funds may be used for road and trail maintenance. Applicants should ensure the Forest Service engineers work with the County Road Department to plan and implement the project.

10. Funding for approved projects is through a reimbursement type grant. This means the applicant should have funds available upfront to spend on projects and be reimbursed for those expenditures later.

11. All non-federal applicants with approved projects will need to meet the requirements for Central Contractor Registration (CCR) (www.ccr.gov) and have a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number (http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform) established.

12. Applicants can include public and partnership letters in support of the benefits of the project with their submission.

13. Projects must be reviewed and recommended by the local Resource Advisory Committee and approved by the Designated Federal Officer for that committee.

14. There is no dollar limit on individual project proposals. The last round of approved projects ranged in dollar value from $3000 to $180,000 with the average value of $39,000.